

## Happy Burning

Visiting South Korea, I had a chance to watch a new Korean film *Burning* (2018) directed by Lee-Chang Dong that wonderfully and relevantly deals with the angst of today's youth, not limited to that of Korea.

The film opens with a somewhat awkward composition that frames the back of a truck of the main character Jong-soo (Ah-in Yoo) who hopes to be a novelist but is met with the wall of reality. Such awkwardness and the situation in which Jong-soo must live in both sets the tone of the film as well as reflects the reality of today's youth in the sense that we, the youth, were raised with the mindset and tools that provide a grand illusion that we can live the way we want however we want whilst reality is strikingly the opposite. Today's youth are stuck in an awkward middle-ness that points to no clear direction - living in a limbo that rejects both the reality and the possibilities of dreams. The term "lost generation" fits to today's youth more so than to any other generations that came before and, perhaps, than to generations that will come after.

Back in our parents' generation and before, when there were angst there were upheavals (e.g. student demonstrations, revolutions, social movements, etc.) that sought to tackle clearly defined oppositions that manifested in clearly defined objectives regardless of what they would become. However, today's upheaval by today's youth manifest as hatred that appear and disappear in social media platforms with no actions for concrete solutions, at most. What are we fighting against? What are we angry at? And most importantly, what do we want? We simply don't know the answer. We are hungry to find meanings for our lives that are more meaningless than ever before.

Today's youth is the product of postmodernism that denies meanings and expressions, and it is that very ideology of postmodernism that we should be fighting against, that we should be angry at, that we should be burning it to ashes, so we no longer have to starve for meanings.

Postmodernism, by its nature, is a very harmful and pointless ideology. I have mentioned this before but I will mention it here once more. Post-modernism (i.e. "after modernism") murders arts, cultures, humanism, religion, freedom, and more. Why is it so? Because anything after postmodernism is still post-modernism (after modern). We have placed our society in a limbo that goes nowhere but endlessly circles around postmodernism. We have come to define our present and already predefined our future by identifying them as "not of the past". We have allowed Structuralism to defeat us. We simply live "not in the past". That's all. In postmodern ideology, we accept that we no longer accept anything. We celebrate the meaninglessness. Ironically, by not accepting anything, we began to accept everything because having everything is having nothing. We no longer accept to understand. Rather, we accept to sustain the nothingness.

Is there a solution? Yes. The youth of today needs to utilize the tools that we have and create works of art that embodies our visions. Don't compromise. Don't follow the Structures of 20th century - they are killing us alive. We must open ourselves to our hearts only and create our own ideologies and start an artistic revolution that tears down the forces of postmodernism.

Happy burning.

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